THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Urea is the only fertilizer under price, distribution and movement controls of the Government. Against the Essential commodities Act (ECA) allocations of 26.77 Lakh Metric Tonnes for Rabi '95-96' to U.P., 9.22 Lakh Metric Tonnes have been made available to the State upto November '95. The availability was adequate to support sales, which were 5.42 Lakh Metric Tonnes during this period.

The responsibility for districtwise distribution of urea is vested with the State Governments. During November '95, however, the Government of U.P. had requested for additional supplies specifically to the Eastern Districts of the State. Accordingly, arrangements were made to rush supplies to these Districts from various sources on a preferential basis.

There have been no complaints, about availability of other major fertilizers namely Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and Muriate of Potash (MOP), which are decontroled.

Illegal Mining in Orissa

2705. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the illegal mining of precious stones in Orissa;

(b) if so, the areas in which illegal mining is going on;

(c) the steps taken to curb such illegal mining; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANAG): (a) to (d) Mining operations in any area can be taken only in accordance with the terms and conditions of a mining lease duly granted under the provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957. The State Governments are empowered under section 21 of the said Act to punish a person who undertakes mining operations in contravention of the provisions of the said Act of 1957. The Central Government does not compile statistics on the actions taken by the State Governments to prevent illegal exploitation of minerals as such.

As per information furnished by the Government of Orissa, the State Legislature has also enacted an Act called 'Orissa Minerals (Prevention of theft, smuggling and other un-lawful Activities) Act 1989'. This Act enables the designated Officers of the State Govt. including police to search any permises and seize precious and semi-precious stones obtained illegally. The offences under this Act has been made cognigable.

Shortage of staff in National backward classes finance and development corporation

2706. SHRI GUNDAPPA KORWAR: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of an acute shortage of staff in the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation;

(b) the proposals for creation of posts submitted by the said Corporation during the last two years;

(c) the details of the action taken; if any, on each of those proposals;

(d) the specific reasons for not clearing each of the remaining proposals and by when these are proposed to be cleared; and

(e) whether Government propose to initiate action against the officials who had kept those proposals pending for such a long time and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) and (b) Two proposals for creation of posts have been submitted by NBCEDC during the last two years..